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VIRGINIA WORKPLACE FATALITIES IN 2007

RICHMOND – The Virginia Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI) reported a preliminary total of 141 occupational fatalities in the Commonwealth in 2007, down by 15 percent from the revised total of 165 fatalities reported in 2006. (See Chart 1.) The total number of fatalities for 2007 was at its lowest level since 1995 when 132 fatalities were reported. Workers from the prime working age group (age 25 to 54) accounted for 64 percent of the fatalities. Ninety-three percent of the fatalities were men. In addition, sixty-six percent of those who died from a workplace injury were white, non-Hispanic.

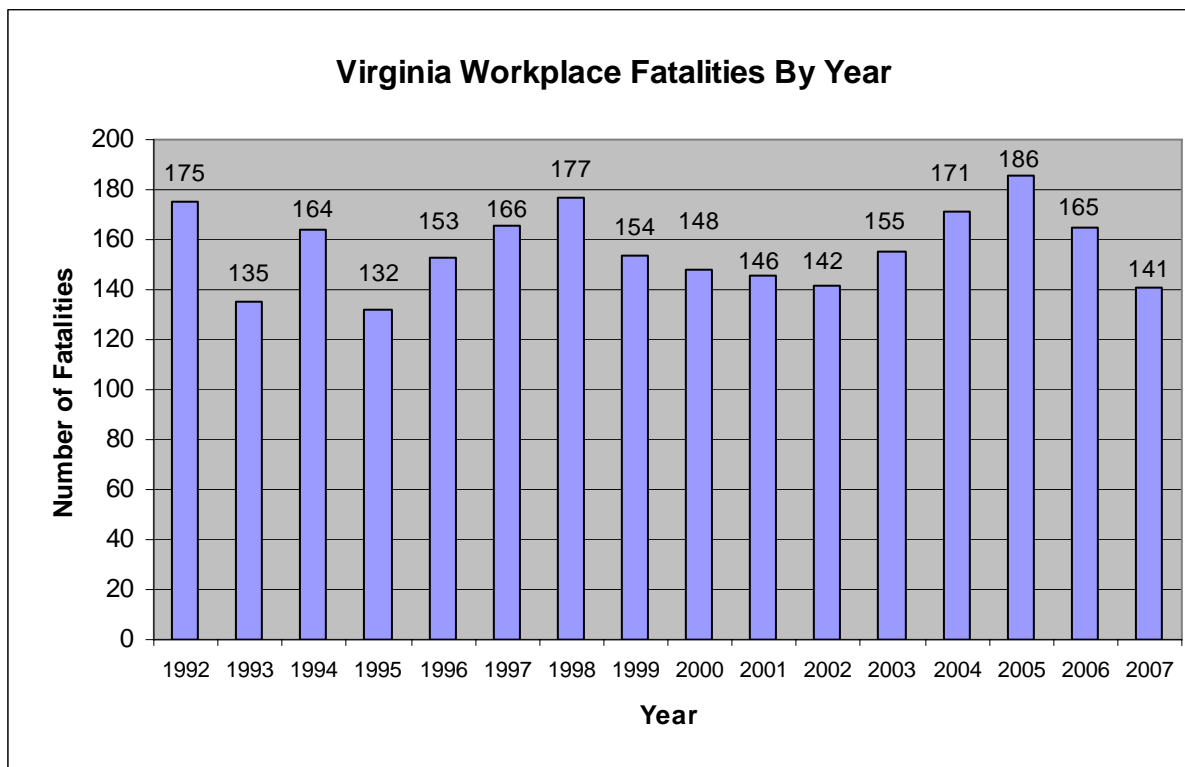
Transportation incidents (53), which include highway, non-highway, pedestrian, air, water, and rail fatalities, decreased by eight from 2006, made up 38 percent of all work-related deaths and continued to be the leading cause of workplace fatalities. Work-related deaths due to falls, mainly falls to a lower level, accounted for 25 deaths and increased by 7 from 2006. The number of on-the-job fatalities resulting from contact with objects and equipment (22) accounted for 16 percent of work-related deaths in 2007, a decrease of 16 from 2006. Forty-five percent of the contact with objects and equipment cases were workers being struck by an object (10). Assaults and violent acts comprised 21 fatalities, over three quarters of which were homicides, and decreased by 11 from 2006. The 16 work-related fatalities resulting from exposure to harmful substances or environments accounted for eleven percent of total deaths. (See Chart 2.)

Construction in the private industry sector had the highest number of fatalities in 2007 at 36, accounting for 26 percent of the total. Workplace deaths in the private transportation and warehousing industry (25) had the second highest number of fatalities of any industry sector,

accounting for 18 percent of the total number of fatalities. Government workers made up 21 of the occupational fatalities. Private sector wage and salary workers fatalities (97) decreased while self-employed workers (23) stayed the same in 2007 from the previous year.

Four detailed occupations accounted for 28 percent of the workplace fatalities: **truck drivers, heavy and tractor-trailer (21)**, **construction laborers (7)**, **farmers and ranchers (6)**, and **tree trimmers and pruners (6)**. Thirty percent of fatal work injuries occurred on streets or highways, 21 percent occurred at industrial places or premises, 15 percent at public buildings, and 11 percent at private residences.

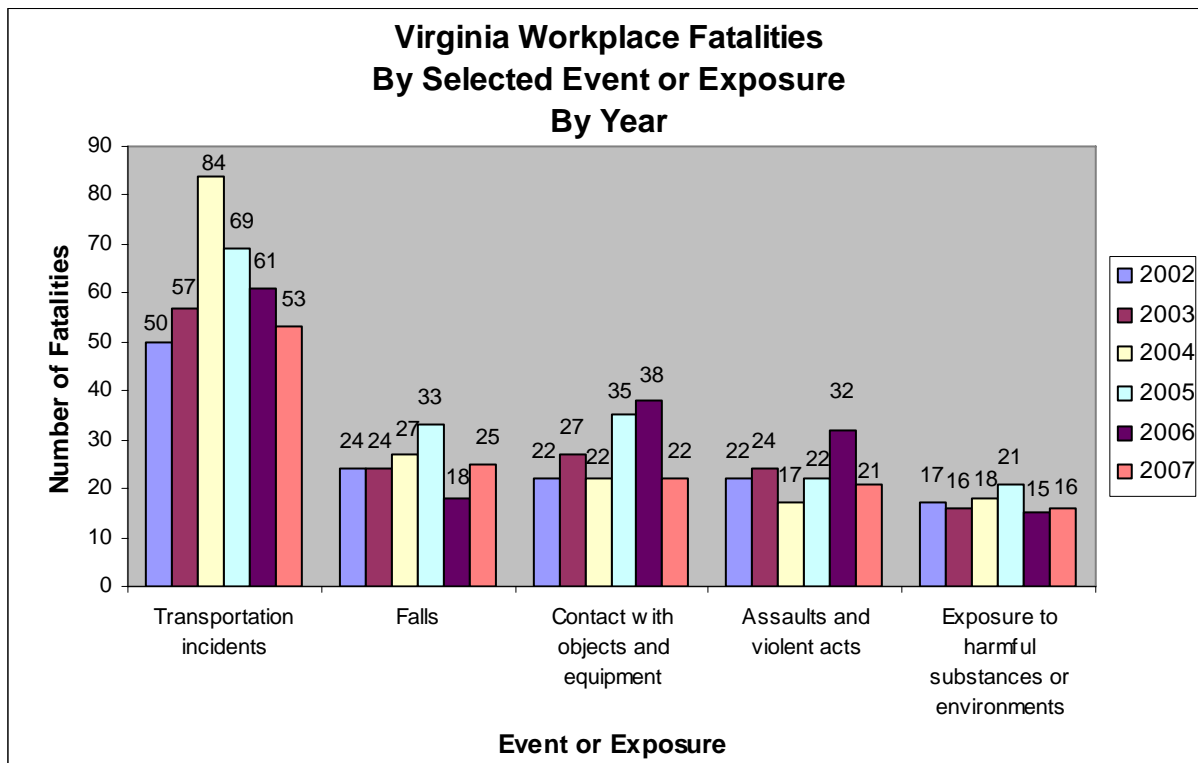
Chart 1



NOTE: The numbers from 2001 exclude the fatality cases from the September 11 terrorist attack at the Pentagon.

“It is gratifying to see fewer workplace fatalities in 2007,” said C. Ray Davenport, Commissioner of Labor and Industry for Virginia. “However, we remain vigilant that fatalities still occur in the Commonwealth’s workplaces.”

Chart 2



Nationwide

A total of 5,488 fatal work injuries were recorded nationally in 2007, down from the revised total of 5,840 fatal work injuries recorded in 2006, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U. S. Department of Labor. The preliminary count for 2007 was the lowest annual total recorded by the fatality census, which has been conducted yearly since 1992. Additional information on the national census of fatal occupational injuries can be found by accessing the following web link: <http://www.bls.gov/iif/>.

Additional Statewide Information

For detailed statistical tables on the Virginia Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI), go to our agency website, <http://www.doli.virginia.gov>. Information can also be requested by contacting our Department at (804) 786-1035 or by sending an email to thuy.au@doli.virginia.gov.

Technical Notes

The Virginia Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries was conducted by the Virginia Department of Labor and Industry in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Information on fatal occupational injuries was compiled from a variety of administrative sources including death certificates, motor vehicle traffic accident reports, medical examiner's reports, state workers' compensation reports, newspaper articles, state and federal OSHA reports, and other government investigative reports. Each fatality for the census was substantiated by at least two independently collected source documents.

The CFOI program is designed to provide the safety and health community with verified counts of fatal work injuries and basic information on fatalities such as how the injury occurred, the type of industry that was involved, as well as occupational and demographic data of the employee. It is hoped that the availability of improved, more detailed data will be used to inform decision-makers about fatalities in the workplace.

While the purpose of the Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries is to compile a complete count of traumatic workplace fatalities, information was also collected on fatal occupational illnesses that were recognized as work-related or that occurred at work. A comprehensive count of fatalities resulting from occupational illnesses cannot be produced from current data largely because of the latency period associated with many occupational illnesses, as well as the difficulty in associating illnesses with exposures in the workplace. Therefore, fatal occupational illnesses are not reported in this census and are excluded from the data.

The Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries, part of the BLS occupational safety and health statistics program, compiles a count of all fatal work injuries occurring in the U.S. in each calendar year. The program uses diverse State, federal, and independent data sources to identify, verify, and describe fatal work injuries. This assures counts are as complete and accurate as possible.

For technical information about the CFOI program, please go to the BLS Handbook of Methods on the BLS web site. To get to that document, click on Workplace Injuries on the BLS home page, scroll down to IIF Documentation, and then click on "BLS Handbook of Methods." The technical information and definitions for the CFOI Program are in Chapter 9, Part 2 of the BLS Handbook of Methods.

Federal/State agency coverage

The Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries includes data for all fatal work injuries, whether the decedent was working in a job covered by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) or other federal or State agencies or was outside the scope of regulatory coverage. Thus, any comparison between the BLS fatality census counts and those released by other agencies should take into account the different coverage requirements and definitions being used by each agency.

Several federal and State agencies have jurisdiction over workplace safety and health. OSHA and affiliated agencies in States with approved safety programs cover the largest portion of the nation's workers. However, injuries and illnesses occurring in certain industries or

activities, such as coal, metal, and nonmetal mining and highway, water, rail, and air transportation, are excluded from OSHA coverage because they are covered by other federal agencies, such as the Mine Safety and Health Administration and various agencies within the Department of Transportation.